I: Karsten--125-126
116, 241, 773

(1916-18) 1935
(1928-29)

Jivaro-1

"All agricultural practices of the Jibaros centre round the particular deity of the women, the great Earth-mother Nungüi. She has not only taught the women agriculture, but also all kinds of housework and duties incumbent on the married Jibaro women, especially how to feed and tend the principal domestic animals, the swine and hens, and the hunting dogs. In order fully to understand the Jibaro customs relating to agriculture, it seems therefore necessary to know the myth of the Earth-mother Nungüi.

In the chapters on the myths of the Jibaros I shall relate this myth in full. Here it may only be necessary to mention its main points.

Nungüi, the Earth-mother, is the being who is worshipped by the Jibaros as the originator of that important part of the Jibaro culture which is represented by the women. In ancient times, we are told, the Jibaros knew none of the plants and fruits which they cultivate to-day and they had nothing to eat. At that time there lived a Jibaro woman called Ungucha. When wandering on the bank of the river looking for food she met the Earth-mother Nungüi and asked her for manioc. Nungüi gave her manioc-beer ready made in a clay pot; she gave her plantations ready worked up and sown with manioc, plantain, batatas, maize, earth-nuts, and all other fruits which the Jibaros now cultivate; she gave her all kinds of game ready prepared. Everything was given to Ungucha gratuitously, without her having to work. But Ungucha proved ungrateful and made unjust demands on Nungüi, so that at last Nungüi left her and retired to the

interior of the earth where she still lives. Now the Jibaros would again have suffered from famine after the Earth-mother left them. But she had already taught them agriculture, to make plantations and to sow the seeds, and the fruits thus grew of themselves in due time.

Nungüi is still worshipped as the great Earth-mother by the Jibaro women--the word Nungüi itself is derived from the same root as the [126] word nuńga, 'earth'. When new plantations are made, when the plants are sown, the women never fail to invoke, in special incantations, Nungüi herself and also her mythical husband, Shakaĕma, who formerly did the same agricultural work as the Jibaro men still do, namely, clearing the ground for making new plantations. When at the 'feast of the women', or on other occasions, the married Jibaro women drink the narcotic nateḿa, Nungüi afterwards appears to them in a dream and teaches them how to tend the fields in order that they shall be very fertile. When the crops fail owing to dryness or from other causes, and famine threatens the Jibaros, then Nungüi again appears to the women in a dream consoling them: 'You will not die, the fields will again prosper all right and give you food.'"

l: Karsten--228-229 (1916-18) 1935 Jivaro
773 (1928-29)

"The reason why the parents [JKM: after the birth of a child] must not eat the fish wámbi is connected with the mythological ideas of the Jibaros. In ancient times, when all animals had human shape, the wámbi was attacked and wounded by some of his enemies while trying to escape from the lagoon where he lived. He was badly hit by a lance, but contrived to draw it out from his body and escaped. However, he lost much blood and, owing to the wound received, has still a red tail and red fins, though the rest of him is quite white. Now if the parents eat the fish wámbi, their delicate [229] child will likewise lose blood, become anaemic, and die. Again, that they abstain from eating the sheat-fish, tungá, is due to the same considerations as make the Jibaro avoid that food after he has sown his maize fields. Since the large fish is extremely restless and violent, the consequence would be, if the parents ate it, that their babe would be 'tired out' and not get the rest necessary for a newborn child."

1: Karsten--313-314 (1916-18) 1935 Jivaro
116, 262, 773, 727 (1928-29)

"The prohibition for the slayer to eat the fish kánga is explained from the mythological ideas of the Jibaros. According to these, as already mentioned, all animal beings, even the fishes, have once been men--that is, Jibaros. Even in primitive times they used to wage war on and kill each other, to make trophies of each other's heads and to celebrate victory feasts. The fish kánga, then, in a fight was killed by one of his enemies, who later on was changed into a bird, the umbrella bird, [313] called ungúmi by the Jibaros. The ungúmi also made a trophy of the head of the fish kánga. Therefore the mouth of the kánga has still great similarity to the reduced mouth of a human tsantsa, and this is the reason why the Jibaro warrior, during the time he has to fast, abstains from eating that fish."

1: Karsten--503 (1916-18) 1935 Jivaro
116, 773 (1928-29)

"The question concerning the origin of the world seems not much to have preoccupied the Jibaro mind. In their mythology they have never sought an answer to the questions, 'Who has created heaven and earth?'. or 'How have they originated?' To the Jibaros it is quite natural that the world has always existed, as also the race of men which they call shuara. The only thing which has interested them is the origin of the very Jibaro culture in its most important aspects, and these questions are dealt with in some of the myths. From some of these, and from their religious ideas stated before, we also gather what ideas they have about the celestial world and certain phenomena of nature."

"In the origin myth of the Jivaros, Uñushi, the sloth, is represented as the first Jivaro and, when the original blood revenge feud took place, the sons of Mika and Ahimbi cut off Uñushi's head and from it made the first tsantsa. (4)

The writer had an opportunity of witnessing a portion of a ceremony of this nature at the jivaría of Cahaka on the lower Upano River. Several years previously one of the wives of Nakata, a brother of Cahaka, was persuaded by a man of the Achuales tribe by the name of Ungucha to run away with him. Nakata followed them to Ungucha's jivaría, where he succeeded in killing Ungucha and recapturing his wife, whom he brought back with him. As she had been an accomplice in the affair, he cut off her ears and her nose and then with a machete cut off both her hands before the other women in the jivaría as an example to them, and he threw the body into the river.

Ungucha was a relative of Nakata, for which reason his head was not taken at the time of his assassination. After several years had elapsed Nakata killed a sloth and the ceremony was performed in Cahaka's jivaría. In general, the ceremony is very similar to the regular tsantsa feast, except that the head is shrunk in the jivaría [73] and the ceremony of leg painting is omitted. In this instance the sloth was prepared during the night in Cahaka's house, where it was hung from a pole. A large number of visitors were

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"4. See p. 128."

present, representing numerous jivarías in the vicinity, including some who had been enemies as a result of the killing of Ungucha. Enough time had elapsed that these had temporarily at least become friends.

The head was hung over the fire from a lance, the butt of which was planted diagonally in the ground. The ceremony lasted for 4 days until the food and nijimanche was exhausted. Cahaka, as head of the household, played the large wooden drum, while Nakata played the small drum or tambo. At the conclusion of the ceremony the head was placed in a closed basket and hung from the rafters of the house. Shortly afterwards the writer secured this head (pl. 33)."

"The Jivaros have been subjected to Christian missionary influences since shortly after the middle of the sixteenth century. Traces of this can be detected here and there throughout their stories. The story of a universal deluge occurs at such an early date, however, that it may be aboriginal in the region.

The myths of the Jivaros, in common with many other culture traits, appear to have formerly been widespread over a large area.

After stating categorically that the Jivaros do not have any religion, Prieto proceeds to disprove it by saying:

> They know that there is a supreme being, giving him the name of Cumbanama as God, and at other times the name of Neche; but they do not give him any worship or type of adoration. They know that there is a bad spirit, who is the devil, but they say that they like him; they have him always for a friend so that he will be favorable to them in their wars. They believe in the immortality of souls, forming the opinion of transmigration, like some bad philosophies, saying that if the Jivaro who dies has been a man of spirit and courage and one who killed many of his enemies, his soul changes into some brave animal, as a lion, tiger, bear or other of this class; but if the Jivaro who died has been a coward, of little spirit, and has not done any heroic deed, his soul changes into a snake, spider,

toad or some other repugnant [122] animal. Aside from this, they do not worship any deity or adore idols, not do they have any other kind of belief beside the aforementioned.

They are very exact in their traditions, communicating from fathers to sons all the wars, heroic deeds and glorious actions of their grandfathers and forefathers, as can be seen by the circumstantial stories about the lost city of Logroño and of the city of old Zamora. For proof and in order to be sure their traditions are constant, let it be shown by their opinion of the universal flood. They say that a cloud fell from the sky and that it inundated the land with water; that all the animals were killed and that a Jivaro man and woman fled to a big high hill, where they found a cave in which they shut themselves up with all the animals, and the waters having subsided, they all left and began to reproduce and populate the world. They likewise have a tradition confused with the curse that Noah gave to his son Ham. They say that there was a rich man who had some good sons and one very bad one, who separated from the others, cursing the first. All the foreigners and white Christians descend from the good sons and for that reason have the things necessary for passing through life with much ease and an abundance of riches; but the Jivaros descend from the bad son, and for this reason do

not have axes and machetes, suffer innumerable hardships, and have an extremely miserable life. (32)"

"32. Prieto, in Compte, p. 64."

"In the early part of the seventeenth century Saabedra gives a legend from the Mainas near Lake Rimachuma which is reminiscent of the above.

Von Hassel gives the following creation myth from the Muratos:

> The creator amused himself by making pottery objects. He constructed a large blue vase and placed it at the height where the sky is found, thus creating the universe. A Murato had been fishing in a lake near the Pastaza when a small crocodile swallowed his hook and the fisherman killed him. The crocodile's mother was enraged and beat the water with her tail in such a manner that she inundated all the territory surrounding the lake. Everyone drowned excepting one individual, who climbed up a chonta palm tree, where he stayed for many days in the midst of continuous darkness. From time to time, he dropped one of the seeds of the tree but always heard the splash [123] in the water. Finally one day the thud of the seed falling on dry ground rewarded his ears. He descended the tree, constructed himself a house, prepared a field for cultivation, and, cutting a piece of flesh from his own body, he placed it on the ground and made a woman who became his wife.
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> At the beginning of the world, all men lived in a big subterranean cave, the entrance to which was guarded by a huge jaguar. One Murato more intelligent and courageous than his fellows attacked the animal and killed it,

giving freedom to his fellow creatures. The occupants of the cave prepared to leave but, as they were very dirty, they warmed water in a large jar in order to wash themselves. The first to wash, while the water was clean, became white men; those who followed, after the water had become dirty, are the Indians; those who were last of all are the negroes.(34)"

"34. Von Hassel, 1905, pp. 68-70."

2: Stirling--123
116, 773, 537

(1930-1931) 1938

Jivaro-1

"At the present time the Jivaros recognize a distinction between the sacred origin myth which they term Nuhiño and the many disconnected legends and tales which are not sacred in character. Most of the Indians interviewed by the writer professed ignorance of the origin myth, although they knew of its existence and mentioned two or three old men whom they stated would probably know it. After a considerable search, one of these men was located, Anguasha, on the Yaupe River, who recounted the tale.

The story was told dramatically with much gesturing, pantomime, and voice modulation, and with the display of considerable emotion. Anguasha stated that it had been many years since he had occasion to call the story to mind and he had to correct himself many times as it gradually came back under the spell of the candlelight and his own oratory. Frequently he paused to say that he wished Hisama were with him so that they might discuss certain points together, because he was not always sure of the proper continuity. A number of times he corrected himself on a previous statement, seeming very anxious that the details should be correct as well as he could remember them. Finally he announced that it gave him a pain in his heart, reminding him of older and more virile days, and requested that he might tell the rest alone with his old friend, Santiago, the interpreter, and with unlimited quantities of nijimanche to loosen his memory and his tongue. In its proper and complete form he said the story is much longer, all of the principal characters having many more adventures than the ones here recounted, but that the story as told gives the principal outline of the significant events of the myth.

It seems strange that a myth of this nature should become forgotten while the general culture of the Jivaros has changed so little, but Anguasha lamented and the other Indians agreed that, with the death of himself and one or two others, the sacred Nuhiño [KS: for text of myth see category 539--pp.124-129] would be gone forever. Most of the Jivaro myths that have been recorded appear to be disconnected fragments which were once a part of this connected account."

13: Rivet--235
116, 773, 177

(no date) 1908

Jívaro

Missionaries have a curious tendency either to deny that the Jívaro have a religious life or to limit it to some incidental practices. In reality, among these Indians, as among many other primitive people, there are many acts connected with superstitious beliefs, and it is probably that a careful study would considerably augment the number.

The same comment is applicable to the traditions, our knowledge of which is very small and very incomplete. Unfortunately, the Christian myths introduced in the 18th century by the Jesuits have deeply altered the original myths and it is often impossible to discriminate between what is actually Jívaro and what has a Catholic origin.

13: Rivet--241
116, 614, 773

(no date) 1908

Jívaro

Information on the existence of totems in the Jîbaro country is rare. The story regarding the flood, which I related before, is evidently of a totemic nature, but a doubt exists as to the legitimacy of its attribution to our Indians. The Aguarunas do not eat the meat of the Hydrochoerus capybara, the Tapirus americanus or the venado (1). Knowing that the other tribes use these animals for food, one may certainly conclude that the Aguarunas are governed by a prohibition of totemic nature specialized by clans, and that a more attentive study would reveal similar facts among the other tribes.

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1. Enrique Brunning. De Chiclayo a Puerlo Melendez en el Maranon. (Boletin de la Sociedad geografica de Lima. Volume XIII, 1903, pp. 12-159; 249-295; 385-418; V. XV, 1904, pp. 1-57) pp. 388 and 403.

34:Harner E-4, 5 (1956-1969)1973 SD9 Jivaro SD9

for it is believed that Nuŋuí can hear it this way as well. A typical version is as follows:

> I am a woman of Nuŋuí.
> Therefore I sing,
> So that the manioc will grow well.
> For when I do not sing,
> There is not much production.
> I am of Nuŋuí.
> Therefore I harvest faster than others.

In addition to providing Nuŋuí with a dancing place and treating her with respect through songs, the mistress of the garden provides her with "babies" to encourage her to remain at the garden. These are three red stones which appear to the women in hallucinogen-induced visions and dreams as babies for Nuŋuí. The stones, which are chips of unworked red jasper, are known as the "stones of Nuŋuí" or the "stones of manioc" and supposedly can only be found through having a dream in which Nuŋuí appears and tells the woman, "I am hiding a 'stone of manioc' in such-and-such a place." Then the woman must go out early in the morning, before eating, to find the stone, because if she were to delay, it would disappear as Nuŋuí made her morning withdrawal down into the earth. Only one such stone is found as a result of a given dream, and each is jealously hoarded. They are hidden in the center of the garden under an overturned food-serving bowl. A myth explaining the origin of this practice is as follows:

> In the olden time there was no manioc or any other agricultural crop. The people just ate the leaf of the *nuŋuí* [a species of the Araceae]. In that time many people died of hunger. Since they were hungry, they said, "Let us go to this stream. Let us catch crabs." As they caught crabs, they followed the stream

Harner E-4, 5 (1956-1969)1973 SD9 Jivaro SD9

• 773 and encountered a woman washing off sweet potatoes, taro [?], manioc, and peanuts. This woman was Nuŋui. There were many Nuŋui there. The people asked that these Nuŋui give them food because they lacked food and fire. One Nuŋui had a fat little female baby. She said, "Take this little baby. It is of manioc." But she also said, "Don't beat my baby, or everything will disappear. And never leave her alone in the house, but always take her with you."

So the people took the baby, whose name was Ciki, back to their house. The woman of the family household told it, "Cause manioc to come here." So the baby said, "Let there be manioc." Immediately manioc filled the house. Then the woman said, "I desire a garden." The baby said, "Let there be a garden." At that moment a garden appeared with all kinds of food. Then the woman said, "Now I want a large beer brewing jar." Instantly there were many beer brewing jars. The woman then said, "I now want two of the brewing jars to be filled with beer." Immediately two of the jars were filled with manioc beer. "Now I want meat here." Then plenty of smoke-dried meat appeared. Then she said, "I want many fish." Instantly there were many fish.

These people always took the baby with them, as Nuŋui had told them to do. As the baby grew bigger, the children of these people grew bigger also. So one day the women went to work in the garden and left the children to take care of the baby. One of the children said to the baby, "We would like to see snakes and boa constrictors." Immediately many snakes and boa constrictors arrived. Then they went away. Then a child said, "Now I want a demon [*tsuenči*]." Immediately many demons came. Then one of the children said to the baby, "Why did you bring snakes and demons?", and threw ashes in the baby's eyes. The [261] baby began to cry. Then the other child said, "Now I want a dried monkey complete with its head [monkey heads, including the brains, are considered to be a particular delicacy]. Then many monkeys and other animals appeared, but without heads.

34:Harner E-4. 5 (1956-1969)1973 SD9 Jivaro SD9

• 1973 Since all of these animals lacked heads, this child began to beat the baby, and the other child continued throwing ashes in the baby's eyes. The baby began calling for its Nunui mother. It climbed up on top of the thatch roof and remained there crying and calling, "Come, mother, let us start eating the peanuts."

There was much guadua bamboo growing near the house, and at this moment the bamboo began waving as if there were a great wind, so that it almost touched the house. Finally the bamboo fell over onto the house and the baby grasped one of the trunks. Meanwhile the manioc in the garden started disappearing into the ground, and the women came rushing back to the house. By this time, the baby had entered a section of the bamboo and sat inside of it as though on a stool [the guadua bamboo often has a diameter of six inches or more]. The women asked what had happened, and the children told them. Immediately, a woman picked up a machete and started chopping up the bamboo to find the baby. She finally found the baby and told it to bring back lots of manioc. But all the baby said was "Cibi." And it only brought forth *ibi* [an emetic].

Nunui said, "I told you not to beat the baby. Now that you have beaten the baby, you will have to suffer a great deal." The entire garden and the trails then disappeared into the ground. This is the reason that nowadays we put stones in the garden, for these red stones appear in the women's dreams as babies. Thus we are giving Nunui babies.

Besides providing domesticated plant food both originally and on a daily basis, Nunui also is said to have given the Jivaro their knowledge of successful pottery making. A version of the myth is as follows:

In the old time there were two orphans, a boy and a girl, who broke a pot. The woman who owned it beat them, and they went off, crying, into the forest. They finally came across a trail. But it was not really a trail, it just looked like one. On the trail

34;Marnell E-4. 5 (1956-1969)1973 SD9 Jivaro SD9

• 773 they encountered Nunui digging clay out of the ground. She told them, "I am Nunui, and I give all the people their food. I shall teach you a song. Sing it, because you are orphans, and make pots. Take some of this clay, and as soon as you get home, make pots with it."

The children obeyed her and found themselves able to make all kinds of pots which did not break when they fired them. There had been pots before, but usually they broke in firing. The children told everyone about their success. When they grew up, their houses contained many pots, they had excellent gardens, and many people came to ask them for pots. The orphans' crops flourished, their chickens and pigs multiplied remarkably, more than those of anyone else, and they taught the other people the song which they use to this day to prevent the pots from cracking during firing.

776 231 562 [324] [782] Nunui is also believed to have given the dog to the Jivaro for hunting. This association of dogs with Nunui is consistent with the importance of the dogs in protecting the gardens from rodents and other destructive animals, and with the fact that they are cared for by the women. In fact, when a man wishes to hunt game that requires the assistance of a dog, he asks a wife to accompany him, and to handle the dog on a leash. It is believed that the presence of the woman, through her connection to Nunui, will help the man have better luck, and she constantly (and usually silently) sings to Nunui for success in getting game and also so that the dog will be protected from snakebite or other misfortune.

792 824 Women also sing to Nunui to help protect the household from attack by enemies who might be approaching through the surrounding garden. That is, they believe that the manioc plants especially have an innate desire and capability to suck the blood from any person touching them. A woman, therefore, sings to them to suck the blood of enemies, but not of

34:Harner E-4. 5 (1956-1969)1973 SD9 Jivaro SD9

danger, one informant said, "My father told me that a long time ago a man took *maikua* all the time. As a result, he lost his mind and would go walking in the forest to speak with the spirits." For these reasons, the shaman tends to use the less strong *Banisteriopsis* drink *natema*. In *arutam* seeking, however, a person in a trance does not need to perform ritual or interact with others, and therefore *Datura*, precisely because of its strength to produce visions, is the drug of choice.

The use of the hallucinogenic *natema* drink among the Jivaro makes it possible for almost anyone to achieve the trance state essential for the practice of shamanism. Given the presence of the drug and the felt need to contact the "real," or supernatural, world, it is not surprising that approximately one out of every four Jivaro men is a shaman. Any adult, male or female, who desires to become such a practitioner, simply presents a gift to an already practicing shaman, who administers the *Banisteriopsis* drink and gives some of his own supernatural power—in the form of spirit helpers, or *tsentsak*—to the apprentice. These spirit helpers, or "darts," are the main supernatural forces believed to cause illness and death in daily life. To the non-shaman they are normally invisible, and even shamans can perceive them only under the influence of *natema*.

The origin of knowledge about the use of *tsentsak* is attributed to Tsuni, the mythological first shaman who is believed still to be alive today living underwater in a house whose walls are formed, like palm staves, by upright anacondas, and where he sits, using a turtle as a stool. He is described as a white-skinned man with long hair, but he also seems capable of transforming himself into the anaconda. From time to time he is reputed to supply particular shamans with special quartz crystal *tsentsak* (*nantar*) which are